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on her for a medical journal."

I asked the young man, an unemployed copywriter named Kevin, what he thought about the Rock Hall. "Forget it," he said. "The real story here is the Indians."

"Yeah," I said. The team has the best record in baseball. "It's been a long time since the Indians had a chance to go all the way. I guess Cleveland has something in common with Boston."

"Boston?" spat Kevin, nearly enraged. "They've had the Celtics and the Pats. Do you realize Cleveland hasn't had a team in the finals of any major sport since the Browns in 1964?"

We talked about Irish bars. The one we were in, he said, used to be a real hellhole. Not that it was a palace now — it didn't even have Guinness on tap — but neighborhood redevelopment triggered a change of ownership and at least swept out the drug dealers. Kevin spoke with mild contempt of the gentrification that turned the old Flats neighborhood into yuppietown.

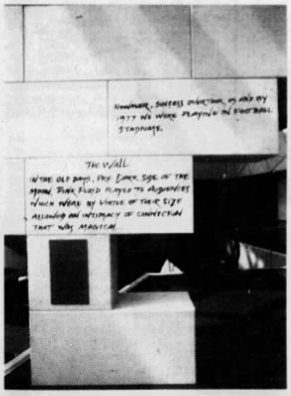
"There's a whole line of good Irish bars, though, out on Lorain Avenue, near where I live," he said, "And I know them all. With my experience, I'll bet you a beer that the family of this bartender here comes from . . ." he squinted and stroked his chin, ". . . County Mayo, Ireland."

I later discovered nearly all the Irish in Cleveland are from County Mayo. But I scarcely grudged the beer.

As I exited the bar, I saw a man coming out of a store next door. He wore dark glasses. Snapping a collapsible white cane out to its full length, he strode away with a spring in his step, tapping his way confidently down the street, stick outstretched. I looked up at the sign above the door: "Videos, 25 Cents per Play, Private Booths." The soundtrack, I imagined, must have been exceptional.

I might even end up
a rock & roll god —
It might turn into a steady job.
—The Kinks

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum does not contain a complete set of pubic hairs from the Dictators, though said item, painstakingly requested from the sources and assembled by *Aesthetics of Rock* author Richard Meltzer during the historic 1970s, was offered to the museum gratis from his private collection. And regardless of the fact that the edifice



PHOTOGRAPHS BY B. KRAFT, SYGMA

displays an impressive array of Chuck Berry sheet music, photos, etc., it screens no video documentation of the "Sweet Little Sixteen" composer pissing into a woman's mouth, though, as I can personally attest, the footage is readily available.

Which is not to say that the museum lacks a sense of humor. It boasts an exhibit of Little Richard's stage costumes. And when installers found the display cases too short for mannequins of Alice Cooper and Gene Simmons, they simply took the heads off and put them on the floor. Given the realities a public institution faces, it does sometimes manage to push the boundaries of good taste a bit.

Displaying a piece of the airplane in which Otis Redding died, for instance, is a bald example of the necrophilia that is such a valuable part of the music. If the curators couldn't procure a hunk of charred flesh, it's no great loss. And the museum had the foresight to mount a series of Stephen Shore's excellent black-and-white photos of the late Andy Warhol and the Velvet Underground, featuring Sterling Morrison, who died of lymphoma just before the opening. As you look at the glowing, pasty faces in the pictures, you sense an overwhelming aura of drug saturation that doesn't need to be captioned. When I examined Sterling M.'s pock-marked face and then a shot of the young, gorgeous and soon-to-be-dead Edie Sedgwick, I couldn't help thinking of the numerous amphetamine-cocktail injections detailed in Sedgwick's biography, and wondering if her ass wasn't just as pockmarked. This is one of the museum's best exhibits, with the minor quibble that, in a photo of the Velvet Undergroud with the late Nico, androgynous V.U. drummer Maureen Tucker is identified as "Nico's son, Ari."

For requisite obnoxiousnous and oppression, the museum's winning entry is "The Wall," Pink Floyd bassist Roger Waters' contribution. A huge inflated mugwumplike creature with floodlight eyes and a puckered asshole for a mouth — labeled "The Teacher," rock-education fans — looms over The Wall, at unpredictable intervals bursting into shouted gibberish and menacing the patrons below. A sort of doped-out stuffed dummy, Pink, slumps on The Wall and in front of a TV. And on The Wall itself are handwritten expositions by Waters, chronicling his alienation from the band's fame, his drug addiction and his self-loathing. Long live rock & roll.

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